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FM AMEMBASSY RIYADH
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8861
INFO RUEHXX/ARAB ISRAELI COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
RUEHZM/GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
RUCNISL/ISLAMIC COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
RUEHJI/AMCONSUL JEDDAH IMMEDIATE 9646
RUEHRH/CHUSMTM RIYADH SA IMMEDIATE
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RHMFISS/COMUSCENTAF SHAW AFB SC IMMEDIATE
RHRMAKS/COMUSNAVCENT IMMEDIATE
RUEKDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUMICEA/USCINCCENT INTEL CEN MACDILL AFB FL IMMEDIATE
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS IMMEDIATE
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO IMMEDIATE 0087

S E C R E T RIYADH 001155

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT PLEASE PASS TO NEA/ELA EMILLER AND SNEWHOUSE,
AND NEA/ARP WROEBUCK

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/27/2018

TAGS: [EUN](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [SA](#) [SY](#)

SUBJECT: SAUDIS WILL ENGAGE EUROPE OVER SYRIA

REF: A. SECSTATE 78880

[1](#)B. RIYADH 1034

Classified By: Charge' d'Affaires Michael Gfoeller
for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (S) Pol Counselor delivered Reftel A demarche to Saudi Ministry of Foreign Affairs International Organizations Director Ambassador Saleh Al-Kuhaimi on July 27. Al-Kuhaimi stated the SAG is engaged with the EU and all major European governments. He fully agreed that Syria has long been a source of regional instability, citing its undermining of the Lebanese government, support for Hezbollah, allowing foreign fighters to enter Iraq to participate in the insurgency, and its alliance with Iran.

[1](#)2. (S) Al-Kuhaimi concurred that any government dealing with the SARG must be extremely wary. He characterized Syria as being duplicitous - a position echoed to us from Saudi King Abdullah on down (Reftel B). Al-Kuhaimi observed that "Arab problems must be worked out by Arabs," mentioning that the SAG had long engaged the SARG in the Arab League. He then lamented Syria's close working relationship with Iran, and how the SARG has facilitated Iranian activity in Lebanon.

[1](#)3. (S) While emphasizing the SAG would continue its ongoing engagement with Europe, Al-Kuhaimi assured he would pass to his superiors the caveat to these governments to take a realistic approach in its engagement with the SARG and to measure it by its deeds not words. While he was not authorized to commit to a decision, Al-Kuhaimi assured he would immediately pass the USG position to his superiors, including Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Saud al-Faisal (who is traveling in France and Morocco until mid-August).
GFOELLER